

THE YOGA OF THE PLANETS

MERCURY, BUDHA

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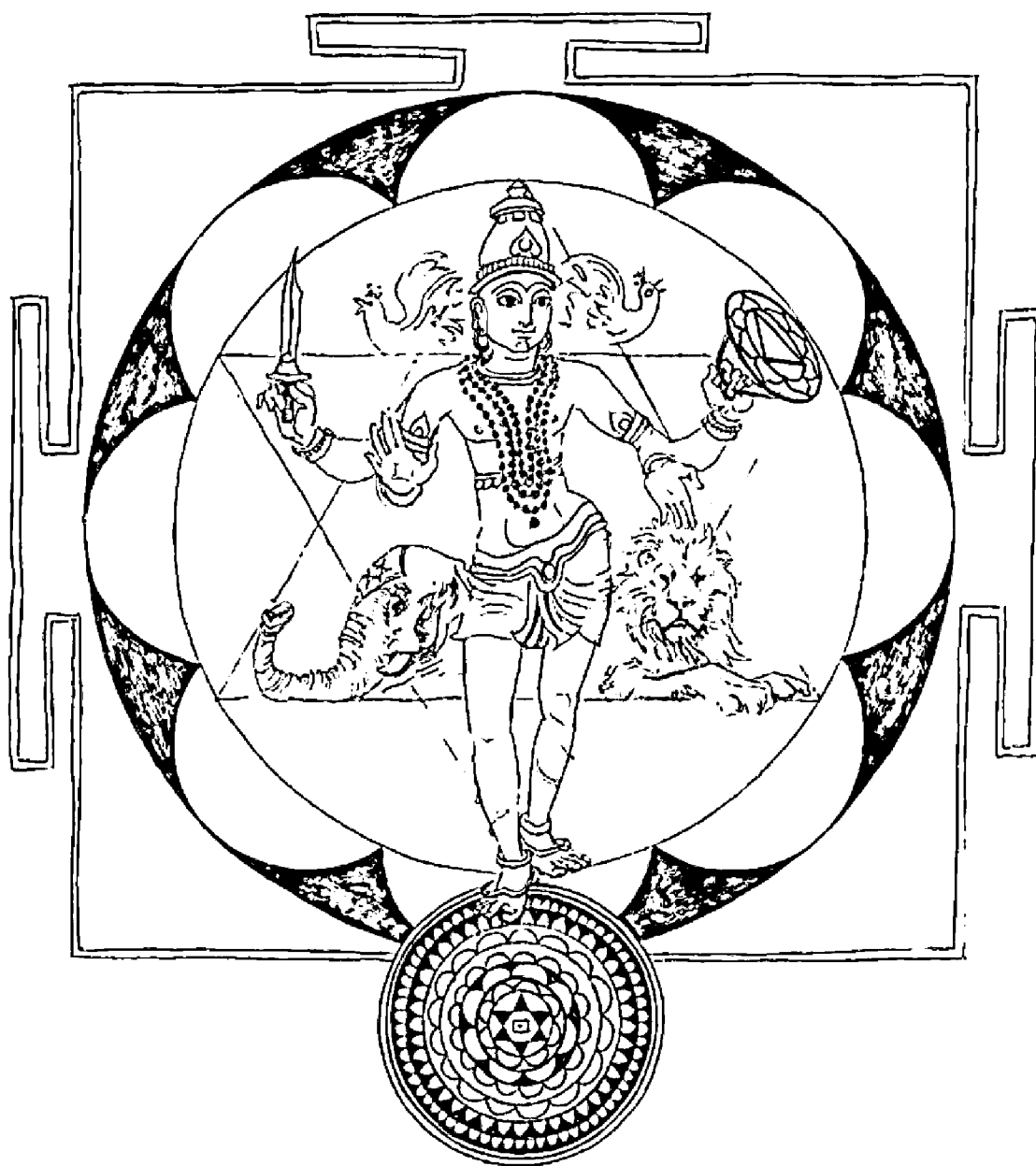


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication

How this Book will Help You

Find your Personal Mantras

The Journey

Notes on Pronunciation from the Transliteration

Hymn in Honour of the Planets

Mercury, Budha

The Mantras of Budha in Transliteration

Secrets of Vimshottari Dashā

Sources and Acknowledgements

The Artists

About the Author

HOW THIS BOOK WILL HELP YOU

This book has many uses. In itself, it is a meditation. There is no need to know anything about Vedic Astrology to enjoy and benefit. There are insights into astrology but the main focus is enlightening the consciousness and providing a rebalancing of the energies represented by the planets. This will happen automatically as one reads the mantras and their commentaries.

There are 108 mantras for each planet used in Vedic Astrology. Each mantra is a descriptive name converted to a salutation and used for meditation or chanting. For example 'om śāntāya namaḥ' means 'salutations to the peaceful one' and is based on the name śānta (shaanta) which means peaceful. Reciting the mantra develops understanding for the quality embodied in the name and can help mental clarity and spiritual development. In the translation, the first mantra of each planet is fully translated. After that, just the names are translated leaving 'Salutations to' understood.

The Vedic planets are normally listed in the order of the days of the week. They are the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn plus the two eclipse points. These are the Lunar nodes called Rāhu (the North node) and Ketu (the South node). The Vedic 'planets' are often referred to as 'Grahas', the Sanskrit word which means 'graspers', as they appear to guide and control our experiences.

For the first time, these mantras are listed with translation and commentary. Even if you only read the commentaries, you will get some of the benefit. If the planet is weak or afflicted in your life, then this acts as a remedy. If it is already strong, this helps to enliven its full value.

A common way of using these mantras is to recite the set of 108 for the planet one chooses¹. For example, one could recite the mantras of the Sun on Sunday mornings. The next chapter, *Find your Personal Mantras*, will explain how to go beyond this and find out which of the mantras will especially enliven your personal chart.

The mantras of the more malefic planets, such as Mars, Saturn, Rāhu and Ketu, naturally contain some names, which describe the more challenging side of the Graha. These help us to understand certain behaviours and this can be remedial. For these names, it may be better to contemplate the deeper meanings rather than simply repeating them. For example, Rāhu is said to be cruel. This association with cruelty arises out of fear. Fear is deeply seated in survival issues.

Contemplating the mantra may help one get in touch with the source of the problem, so it can be alleviated. Loving an injured heart can be the basis of real change. This applies to our self or another. I do not recommend using the more challenging names as regular practice

mantras and I certainly do not recommend you ask another person to do them even if they come up when you do the calculations described in the next chapter. On the other hand, I have found listening to the sets of 108 names has been beneficial for my clients.

If chanting one or a set of mantras, I suggest you start with

om gaṁ gaṇapataye namaḥ

to invoke the pure state of mind and end with

om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

meaning ‘Om peace, peace, peace’.

For convenience, I am publishing the mantras of the nine planets of Vedic Astrology in nine separate eBooks. Put together, the length was too great but I am combining them all in the printed version. To find the eBook for another planet, visit YogaOfThePlanets.com. There you can also find information on the audio of the recitation of the mantras. I have on occasion given these to clients to listen to when that planet was afflicted in their chart with very positive results.

FIND YOUR PERSONAL MANTRAS

A great secret being released with this book is how to find the best mantras for you from the list of 108. This secret has been closely kept by a few Indian Astrologers and I am indebted to my teacher, Pandit Sanjay Rath, for enlightening me about this.

It is very simple. The reason why there are 108 mantras for the planets as well as such lists for the deities is because the zodiac is naturally divided into 108 segments. 108 is said to be the number of Shree, the Goddess of prosperity. Astrologically, it is our whole world. For example, the name of a new born child is often given based on the Moon's place in these divisions.

It is not only the Moon that is important. The Sun is very important and all the other planets of Vedic Astrology can be key. It all depends on our chart. Whatever the chart, doing the mantra for the position of a planet can be very beneficial. It will resonate with us and thus has extra energy.

There are a number of approaches for finding a powerful mantra for you or for a client, student or friend. The first I describe requires no astrology and the others are connected to the actual positions of the planets. For those with an interest in Vedic Astrology, this can become quite detailed as we drill down on the relationship between different planets. Therefore, a chapter on advanced applications is to be found in the printed version of the book. Here we give the easy astrological applications.

However you arrive at a mantra, please pay attention to the caveat mentioned in the previous section.

Method One, the Random Number

Picking a random number may sound an unlikely idea but it is something that many prognostic systems employ, including the Vedic Astrology method of answering questions. This technique often gives clear insights. If you are calm and quietly focused, then nature talks to you and one way of facilitating this is picking a number. There are really two situations, finding a number for oneself and finding one for another. For example, if you are a Yoga teacher whose student wants a mantra or someone sharing with a friend.

Suppose you want a random number for yourself and do not want to imagine a number out of 108. You can get three single digit numbers by picking numbers you see. One way is to open a book and take the final digit of the page number and do this three times. For example, suppose you open a book at random three times and get pages 21, 143 and 79. Pick the final digits which would be 1, 3 and 9. Write down these digits to form a number 139 and adjust

to the desired range by subtracting 108. In this example, $139 - 108 = 31$. Of course, you can come up with many alternate ways of getting a number.

My astrological software Shri Jyoti Star₂ gives a random number. In the Data Entry screen, click 'Enter Number'. If you are asked about 'Replacing the current chart...' click Yes or No. In the next screen, make sure the Range is set to 108 and you will see a random number is given to you.

If there is another person involved, one can ask them for a number. This often works. What we want is a number between 1 and 108. If the person gives us a number larger than 108, we can keep subtracting 108 until we get a number in the desired range. For example, if they say 250, then subtracting 108 twice (216) gives 34. However, we may feel that the person is interpreting our answer to mean a single digit number only or perhaps knows the system we are using too well and may be biased towards certain numbers. Then we can ask for three single digit numbers as in the method described just above but we can write them down in reverse order. This is just a suggestion, in reality we can use any scheme that we like.

A separate app for this book is planned, which will do both random number and astrological calculations (information will be posted on YogaOfThePlanets.com).

Method Two, Using the Astrological Chart

The following is how to find the number for your natal Moon (or any planet). First, find out the sidereal position from any software, for example Shri Jyoti Star. In the current version 7, it will also give you the mantra number next to the planet glyphs in charts. The planned app for this book will also give the number (see YogaOfThePlanets.com) but it is easy to do it by hand if one has the planet position. Examples are given below.

In the table following, look up the planet position and find the number. Note, the table is at the end of this section and it is quite narrow to facilitate reading on narrow screens. If you still cannot see the whole width of the table, rotate your device to Landscape or pinch in until you can see the whole table.

For example, suppose the planet is at Virgo 5 degrees. 5° is between $3^{\circ}20'$ and $6^{\circ}40'$ so look in the second column of numbers under $6^{\circ}40'$ in the row for Virgo. You will find the number 47. Then look in the book for the mantra numbered 47. In the main text, the number is given at the start of the commentary, after the mantra. In the lists at the end, the mantra follows the number. For the Moon, the mantra for 47 is 'om muktidāya namaḥ'.

This is the simplest application of the rule where the number is counted from the start of the zodiac. This can be called 'God's view' as the beginning of the zodiac is the beginning of the chart from the point of view of the Creator. Thus, it is very powerful. However, there are other views. There is the count from the Moon, which gives the social or personal view.

There is the count from the Sun, which is like the view from our soul. Another important count is from the Ascendant, which relates to the body and health. Reciting the mantra we get from this count may help our health but if we feel sick we should always consult a medical professional.

We can make a count from any of the planets as the starting point. In Jyotisha (Vedic Astrology) there are systems of planetary cycles (periods), especially the famous Vimshottari Dashā system. All Vedic Astrology software like Shri Jyoti Star give these cycles too. Even some Western Astrology software or online software give them. For example, you might be running a Venus Moon cycle and subcycle. That means you are in the major cycle of Venus and the minor cycle of the Moon (called a Bhukti). In this example, one can count from Venus to the Moon and use the mantra from the Moon list.

For example, let us find the mantra for the Moon from the perspective of the Sun. Let us suppose the Sun is at 8°10' Leo and the Moon is at 4°30' Sagittarius. First find the number for the Sun from the table as we did above, which is 39, and then the number for the Moon from the table which is 74, as 4°30' is greater than 3°20' and less than 6°40'. Now subtract 39 from 74 and add 1, which gives you 36. Then find mantra 36 in the mantra list for the Moon. We add 1 because if both planets have the same number, the answer has to be 1, there is no mantra for zero. If the subtraction gives a negative value, just add 108 to the result.

Now you know how to find key mantras for your chart in general and for your Dashā cycles. I recommend you start with 'God's view' as this can be considered the most important.

(The table is on the next page)

Degrees up to

Sign	3 ⁰	6 ⁰	10 ⁰	13 ⁰	16 ⁰	20 ⁰	23 ⁰	26 ⁰	30 ⁰
	20'	40'		20'	40'		20'	40'	
Aries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Taurus	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Gemini	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Cancer	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Leo	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
Virgo	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Libra	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Scorpio	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
Sagittarius	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
Capricorn	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
Aquarius	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
Pisces	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108

THE ASTROLOGICAL HOUSES

In various places in this book you will find reference to houses or places from some important personal marker such as the Ascendant or the Moon. The simplest and traditional way of understanding this is in terms of the 12 signs of the zodiac, Aries, Taurus, etc. If the Moon is in Taurus, then Taurus is the first house or place from the Moon. Gemini is the second. Aries is the twelfth, etc. One only has to count round by signs. The Ascendant is in the sign rising on the Eastern horizon at the time of birth.

THE JOURNEY

On March 3rd, 1995, I entered the sacred and tranquil valley surrounding the small village of Kollur. I had fostered a desire to visit here for eight years since a friend told me about it. I did not know why I felt this connection but when I was finally able to travel to India I set my heart on reaching that place. It seemed very special and I must have feared going straight there in case my energy was unprepared. I chose to go first to Tamil Nadu on the opposite coast and to the great temple of Rāmeshvaram.

Rāmeshvaram is on the spit of land opposite Sri Lanka. This is the place Shrī Rāma worshipped Lord Shiva before launching his campaign to recover his wife Sītā from the demon king. To cross the ocean, his army of monkeys and bears built a bridge or causeway across the ocean. This was many thousands of years ago but, amazingly, the remains of a causeway to Sri Lanka are still visible in satellite photos. According to temple records, Shrī Rāma's bridge was passable being completely above the sea until destroyed by a cyclone in 1480 AD.

From Rāmeshvaram, I visited the great temple of Mīnakshī and thence to the very tip of India, Kanyakumari. This place has remarkable temples especially that of the Virgin Goddess. I rose and went at 3:30 am and was almost alone in witnessing the bathing of the Goddess in milk. It was the Full Moon day. A little later I did homage to the shrine for the Navagraha and received a distinct blessing. Prior to that I had done some study of Jyotisha but had received no authority from any Guru or other source to study and practice. This was a most unexpected Grace.

From Kanyakumari, I travelled up the Kerala coast visiting Ashrams and temples until I came to Kollur. It was a great moment, though for no obvious reason at all. Kollur is home to the famous temple of Devī Mookāmbikā, the Goddess of the mouth. It is said she grants blessings related to the voice and the arts. Most evenings, artists from all over India come to perform before her. They sing, dance and play instruments.

At the time I knew nothing about this temple. I did not know that astrologers from all over South India come here to pray and do penance for Vāk Siddhi, the power that whatever one says proves true. After all, people expect an astrologer to have this power. While, in rare cases, it is possible that a person is born with this, generally it only arises after long and sincere spiritual practice. This is why Vedic Astrology, Jyotisha, is primarily a spiritual discipline and one should seek a guru or gurus to guide one's spiritual and intellectual development.

The essence of success in an earthly endeavour is the Grace of the Goddess and for each aspirant there is some form that appeals to him or her and which can grant success.

There are rules for finding this form but ultimately it is very personal. I should make it clear that talk of gods and goddesses does not conflict with the monotheistic view because the Vedic view is that the One takes whatever form we desire or can be approached as purely formless if that is our path.

The worship of the Goddess in India is, at its peak, related to the Shrī Vidyā and the Shrī Chakra. The great sage and teacher Adi Shankarāchārya installed a Shrī Chakra under the deity in the Mookāmbikā temple. After some time in Kollur, I came to know that he also installed a Shrī Chakra at the top of the highest mountain nearby where the root shrine of the Goddess is to be found. Part of the pilgrimage is to walk to the top of this mountain. It is about 12 miles or one can take the bus part of the way and walk the last 3-4 hours. I had many extraordinary experiences on this mountain as well as in the temple, which I will write about elsewhere.

While I was staying at the temple, somehow I conceived of this book. It seemed to me that the sets of 108 names of the Grahas (planets) were important and used by astrologers but I could find no trace of a translation or commentary. So I started making notes. When I could not understand a word, I discussed it with my friend UmaShankar Jois who is one of the distinguished priests at the temple. He studied Jyotisha with a great Guru though he passed away before my friend's studies were complete. UmaShankar is a great expert in the remedial measures and he felt I had some knowledge on the analysis of charts so we spent a lot of time discussing Jyotisha together.

I stayed at Kollur for more than 40 days, as is the custom, and then went for Shivarātri in Varanasi. This is the greatest festival for Lord Shiva and Varanasi is considered the city of Shiva, and is one of the most profound places to celebrate it. As I was about to leave Kollur, I went to the temple to take Her leave to go. The priests put me at the front during the Arti (ritual waving of lights before the shrine), which is the peak of the evening worship. Then I got on the bus to go to Bangalore where I could catch a train for the North.

As it happened, the conductor of this bus was part of a ring of thieves who stole the luggage of innocents like me. I arrived in Bangalore without anything, all my notes were gone. Still I managed to continue my journey and reached Varanasi, the great city of Shiva, at 4 am on Shivarātri. I washed and went straight to the temple having no luggage to concern me. Standing in the queue I noticed that I was the only male wearing traditional clothing. There was a guard on the door and they often turn 'tourists' away. He looked me over for a while and then enthusiastically said 'om namaḥ śivāya' and waived me in.

The next year, I returned to Kollur with another notebook. I started by writing down all that I remembered and naturally found that my understanding had improved over the year and quickly was ahead of my previous work. When I left Kollur after another 40+ days I had just

a few names which I could not decipher. I visited Prof. Ramachandra Rao in Bangalore who was one of the two people that I found who had published the lists of the names. We had an interesting discussion. He was a very great scholar. Unfortunately, he has now passed away. Travelling through India I met many good scholars who kindly gave me their opinions so the meanings became clear. Since then, from time to time I wrote my small commentary. It reflects many stages in my own spiritual life. I hope you enjoy it.

In 2007, I visited a small house a few miles north of the great Konark temple. This temple, though now partially ruined, was perhaps India's greatest temple to the Sun god. It is built like a giant chariot. Some of the carvings are now in the British Museum including the large carvings of the nine Grahas (planets). The Konark temple stands near the beach in the North Eastern part of India's V shape so is one of the first places to see the rays of the rising Sun. Konark is some 20 miles north of Puri where the great Jagannātha temple of Lord Krishna is to be found administered by the Shankarāchārya of the East. He is charged with maintaining the *Rig Veda*, accepted as humanity's oldest recorded wisdom text.

About 500 years ago, the great spiritual teacher Chaitanya Mahāprabhu resided here and the lineages derived from him are still very widespread today, such as ISKCON. He had five 'sakhas' or friends, as they were called, one of which was Swāmi Achyutānanda. The Swāmi was initiated by the great teacher at an early age and went on to become the King's astrologer, a noted author of over 200 books and an enlightened sage. He also founded 13 schools in the region. These taught various sciences and several were dedicated to Jyotisha. When he was leaving his body, he promised to remain in a 'shunya' form. Shunya means the void and it is a term he explained in great depth in one of his books. It does not refer to mere nothingness but to a profound state of Being.

He kept his promise and even today you can go and consult him. That is where I was going. There is a small shrine and next to it are the quarters of a pandit who keeps and interprets a set of copper plates (tamra poti). These plates only contain some drawings like the shape of a lotus, but when you enter there with a question in your mind, the answer appears written in ancient Odia (the local language 500 years ago) and the pandit reads them for you. If you look, you can actually see the writing appear. I went there with several friends, all of whom were students of Pandit Sanjay Rath who is the last remaining person carrying the knowledge of the Jyotisha schools founded by the Swāmi. In effect, we had joined his lineage. The answers we got were remarkably pertinent and insightful. We were all given mantras. I later talked to a colleague who has taken over 40 people there and he said no one had ever been given a mantra.

The Swāmi told me to finish my book. I noticed that when I did the mantra, I would work more on this text. I hope he forgives me for the long time spent in fulfilling his instruction

but perhaps I or the time was not ripe before now. This year (2015) marks the 20th year since I started and only this year did I make the important discovery about the Vimshottari Dashā which is published in this book. In the derivation of the Vimshottari Dashā cycles or periods, the great significance of 20 years is revealed.

The name of the Sun temple is from Kona + Arka. Arka is a name of the Sun and Kona means trine. In Jyotisha, this indicates the Dharma Trikoṇa, the sustainer of life, which I have written about in many places in this book and is so important in the interpretation of the Vimshottari Dashā.

NOTES ON PRONOUNCIATION FROM THE TRANSLITERATION

In the transliteration, there are marks called diacriticals that aid correct pronunciation.

In Sanskrit there are long and short syllables. The long ones are to be sounded for twice as long as the short ones, even longer is OK. Vowels with a line over them like 'ā' and double vowels like 'ai' are all long. 'ḥ' (h with a dot under it) is pronounced like 'ah', that is with aspiration. It is often pronounced as 'ahah' but this is not recommended for mantras as it effectively adds another syllable and the syllable count of a mantra is important. 'ś' with an acute accent is like 'sh'. For example, 'śukrah' is pronounced 'shukrah'.

Consonants or sibilants with a dot under them like ṭ or ṣ are retroflex. For example, ṭ is pronounced as the 't' in Tom. You curl your tongue back and strike your palate. 't' on the other hand is a dental sound. 'th' is 't' with some aspiration as are all the other syllables that have an 'h' like 'bh', 'dh' and 'gh'. You just blow a little when saying the consonant.

The 'ṛ' such as in 'bṛhat' is a vowel in Sanskrit pronounced like the 'ry' in jewelry. 'c' is pronounced as 'ch', as in 'change'. In the commentary, I usually use 'ch'. If 'ch' appears in the transliteration, then it is like 'chh', which is 'ch' with some extra aspiration.

Please visit a Sanskrit learning web site or teacher for more detailed advice. One good site is learnsanskrit.org.

The Devanagari (Sanskrit) support on a PC is excellent but may not be so perfect on mobile devices. Older Kindle devices and other eReaders may not show it at all. One can always check against the transliteration, which should be correct.

Please note that the first time part of a mantra is mentioned in the following text, it is italicized. Sanskrit terms in the commentaries are often transliterated but not always according to the more rigorous scheme. Sometimes the more usual form is followed using the standard English alphabet.

HYMN IN HONOUR OF THE PLANETS

ॐ गं गणपतये नमः

om gaṁ gaṇapataye namaḥ

ब्रह्मा मुरारिस्त्रिपुरान्तकारी भानुः शशी भूमिसुतो बुधश्च।
गुरुश्च शुक्रः शनिराहुकेतवः सर्वे ग्रहाः शान्तिं करा भवन्तु॥

brahmā murāristripurāntakārī bhānuḥ śaśī

bhūmisuto budhaśca |

guruśca śukraḥ śanirāhuketavaḥ sarve grahāḥ

śānti karā bhavantu ||

Brahmā (the Creator), Murāri (Vishnu, the Sustainer), Tripurāntakarin (Siva, the slayer of the demon Tripurāsura), Bhānu (the Sun), Shashin (the Moon), Bhūmisuta (Mars, the son of the Earth), Budha (Mercury), Guru (Jupiter), Shukra (Venus), Shani (Saturn), Rāhu and Ketu, may all these Grahas be peaceful.

ॐ बुधाय नमः

om budhāya namaḥ

1. Salutations to the learned one.

Budha has a great depth of meaning. It has the sense of awaking, being learned and wise; to know, learn, and perceive as well as causing others to learn or realize. When the Sun causes a flower to expand its blossoms, that is *Budh*. The awakening of consciousness is *Budh*. Buddha is the awakened one, and this is derived grammatically from *Budh*.

ॐ बुधाचर्तिय नमः

om budhārcitāya namaḥ

2. Worshipped by the wise.

Budha is the light (*Archi*) of wisdom itself. It is that light that is praised, not some personality. When we honour a sage or anyone, we are praising their wisdom and other qualities, not the individuality. If someone praises us and we take it personally and our ego rises up, then this can then lead to much trouble. In the ancient law book, the *Manu Smriti*, it says that praise burns up the virtues of a person like a forest fire. On the other hand, when people speak ill of you, they are kindly taking your sins on their own heads. That is why we should be careful of listening to those who praise us and be grateful of our abusers. I think anyone who pays attention will know the truth of this. Life is really quite different from what it appears to be.

We all have the light of wisdom within us. It is like a small flame that grows with care and attention. Initially, we may have to be extremely quiet to bring it to conscious awareness. Having found it, then we should give it the fuel of attention every day. The wise are those who constantly attend the flame. Traditionally, the sacred fire is worshipped at every junction of the day: sunrise, midday (apparent noon) and sunset. The junction times are moments of quiet in nature when it is easier to find the inner light. If we keep feeding the fire it may burn so bright that it never leaves our awareness.

ॐ सौम्याय नमः

om saumyāya namaḥ

3. Peaceful, content.

Saumya can mean born from Soma, which is a name of the Moon. It is said that Jupiter was married to Tārā (star) but then the Moon eloped with her and she bore Mercury by him. Eventually, by the intervention of Brahmā, the creator, Tārā was restored to Jupiter. When Jupiter saw the child, it was so beautiful that his anger melted and he adopted the child. From this we know that Mercury indicates adoption and also a Guru's (Jupiter) students who are like his children during their studies. Also, that Mercury can make a person very handsome or charming.

The nature of true wisdom is that it leaves us in a very gentle and peaceful inner state.
4 Highlighters
Like the Moon or the Divine Mother, it has great softness and is utterly relaxed. The person may be very active in their life but internally there is a calm steadiness.

ॐ सौम्यचित्ताय नमः

om saumyacittāya namaḥ

4. Of peaceful mind.

This state of peace (*Saumya*) pervades all the active states of the mind. *Citta* is the heart, the mind, the memory, the intellect and reason. It is also what we see and desire. Everything is made calm. Mercury (reason) and the Moon (feeling, desire) tend to compete causing confusion. The solution lies in this state of peacefulness, which arises from the awakening of true knowledge.
3 Highlighters

ॐ शुभप्रदाय नमः

om śubhapradāya namaḥ

5. Giver (*Prada*) of all good (*Shubha*).

Real peace gives every kind of useful benefit. There is nothing to compare with it other than those sublime states that arise from it. Out of one awakening, another arises, each more beautiful than the last. One experience is the flow of insights into problems as they come to

mind, small or big. Others are the internal openings, the spiritual awakenings. This flow can happen to anyone, it only takes a little bit of peace in the heart. The world is full of distractions. This is why, when we have a problem to solve, we put down our phones and computers and go for a walk on our own in the park or go and sit in a shrine.

ॐ दृधवृताय नमः

om dṛdhavratāya namaḥ

6. Of firm vows (*Dṛdha Vrata*).

Firm means persisting with what one vows to do. Mercury rules two zodiac signs: Gemini, an air sign and Virgo, an earth sign. Air gives movement and earth gives stability. When resolved, its undertakings can be unshakeable.

This name gives us the clue that Mercury is the planet that has the willingness and capability to repeat a mantra very many times. This is helpful for spiritual practices as well as in the Vedic remedies. These are to help if some area of one's life is blocked or afflicted. This typically involves spending a few minutes or hours a day for 40 days or a year repeating a particular mantra. Perhaps one has to repeat it 100,000 times. When you start doing it, it starts to work and that may involve, on occasions, some tough experiences as one's dysfunctions get redressed. It is like a washing machine. If one does not have a firm resolve, one will not keep at it and little will be achieved. The astrological chart shows us our limitations. We can then work to lessen these limits or not, as we wish. If we choose to wear them away, we will have to do the work involved but the rewards are great.

ॐ दृधफलाय नमः

om dṛdhaphalāya namaḥ

7. Giving stable, long-lasting results.

Dṛdha indicates that the results (*Phala*) of the vows undertaken are not momentary but have real and profound implications. This underlines that a firm resolve is always essential for success.

ॐ श्रुतिजालप्रबोधकाय नमः

om śrutijālaprabodhakāya namaḥ

8. Competent in creating an effect.

Shrutijāla can mean magic or illusion. It can also mean the collection (*Jāla*) of the Vedic hymns. They are called *Shruti*, that which is heard or cognized. *Prabodhaka* suggests great power or ability.

Having made a firm vow to accomplish something, how is this undertaken by Budha? Here we are told that his learning and skill are employed. While Mars shows his sword, Mercury skillfully creates an effect to direct the minds of others to support his intent. If he is expert in mantras, he can even harness the subtle powers of nature. This can be thought of as magic and there are legitimate and illegitimate uses of mantra. Those who indulge in black magic are digging themselves a deep hole. However skilful, sooner or later they fall into the well of their own creation from which it is hard to escape.

Mantras done for self-purification and awakening are harmless, if we know what we are doing. Some mantras, like those in this book, are safe. However, please read the section *Caveat* on page 9. Others are meant to be received from an expert who can determine their suitability for the person. There are many rules and it is desirable that the teacher has awakened the Shakti of the mantra through their own consciousness and practice.

ॐ सत्याऽवासाय नमः

om satyā'vāsāya namaḥ

9. Truth is dwelling in him. Clothed only in truth.

Satya is truth. *Avāsa* is unclothed or naked. This name is mentioned here to counter any possible misunderstanding from the last name. Black magic or any kind of deceit is not truth. Truth is never deceitful. Therefore, the only type of Mantric application that is legitimate is if it transforms the user to a higher state and makes him or her fit for a better destiny. Some people are born with some kind of ability. With little effort, they can make others or even natural forces do their bidding. I have personally observed that exploiting such power is not advisable except in extreme circumstances. The difficulty is that one does not know the scope of what one is doing.

Suppose there is a drought and you make it rain. If you have that blessing, which is directly related to Mercury and the nodes, this is not difficult. However, what happens to the weather in other places because of the change you induced? Has some farmer who needed rain been deprived because the rain went elsewhere? I'm giving a very mild example but I have seen more serious cases. We humans are expert in exploiting the natural world. If we

had more power we would use it. Thank God we are given only a little even though it can be increased with practice

That is why, first, we have to rise above our animal nature. Really, we are two creatures in one body. There is the violent, exploitative, selfish lower nature and there is the divine, selfless and utterly noble higher nature. We are all a mix. Infinite power resides at the base of the spine and it is part of the great intelligence of nature that it cannot be fully utilized by the selfish small ego. However, there are intermediate stages. It is like a novice warrior who is given a weapon after some training but before the full course is completed. At this stage, he might easily hurt himself or others. So, some power can be gained before the selfishness is transcended and that little power looks like a lot to the average human. That is how some bad things happen. The story of the sage Milarepa (Moon 6) . It is a helpful example.

ॐ सत्यवचसे नमः

om satyavacase namaḥ

10. Speaking truth (*Satya Vachas*).

He embodies truth and communicates it. Those fond of a particular religion naturally feel their book is the word of God and is the highest truth. That is why we expect the religious people to exemplify truthfulness.

The signs of Mercury are opposite those of Jupiter. They are the two planets of learning and knowledge and represent the teacher, Jupiter, and the student, Mercury. When they join in the sky, it is said to be a Guru Shishya (teacher + student) Yoga and is very auspicious. The intelligence of Mercury guided by the wisdom of Jupiter, is the best possible situation. How the yoga expresses itself depends on the sign(s) of the zodiac involved. For example, Cancer gives the highest philosophy while Scorpio may take a Tantric angle. Whatever we find in this world, it is a result of the combinations of planets and constellations. Each person is a unique expression, evolving according to the Divine Will and thus perfect in God's view.

Traditionally, each Guru saw what the tendency of the student was and gave him or her the appropriate kind of knowledge and work. That is why individual guidance is best. An instruction given to someone else is just for them unless it rings in our heart. Great teachers can answer our questions even if we are unable to get close enough to ask. We only need to be alert for the clues.

The Mercury Jupiter conjunction has other names. Jupiter rules the North-East where Gemini lies in the Vedic chart. As this is the direction of Ishāna (Shiva), this combination is called Ishāna Yoga. In Lord Krishna's chart, Mercury and Jupiter are conjoined in planetary

war in the fifth house. This house can indicate books and the great *Bhagavad Gītā* was expounded on the battlefield. Hence, this Yoga is sometimes called the Bhagavad Gītā Yoga. It is highly fruitful and auspicious. It can start wisdom lineages.

^{3 Highlighters}
The opposition of Mercury and Jupiter represents the debate between the teacher and the student. A bright student delights the teacher by asking difficult questions. The simple and devoted also delight the teacher because their simplicity is the essence of truth. The great Adi Shankarāchārya had four disciples. Two had great learning and the third exceptional realization. The fourth washed the master's clothes and performed other needed service. Through this simple devotion, he was the first to realize the complete knowledge. The Guru appointed him as the master of the knowledge in the North.

^{3 Highlighters}
Mercury, unless retrograde, is debilitated in Pisces, a sign of Jupiter. Pisces is the 12th sign of the zodiac and represents the end of the path. In Pisces, all our attempts at self-promotion have to end so we can fit through the slim gateway into the field of bliss. Overcoming the ego is the challenge of every Pisces Ascendant. When Mercury is exalted, we are full of brilliant ideas or busy with collecting wealth. The debilitation is the challenge to accept the wisdom of Jupiter without trying to reinvent it. Whatever Graha is in Pisces, there is the opportunity to gently let go of its agenda. This can make the Graha very auspicious.

ॐ श्रेयसां पतये नमः

om śreyasām pataye namaḥ

11. Lord among the righteous or fortunate.

Pati is the leading person or lord and *Shreyasam* are the blessed or most fortunate ones. Having a strong Mercury is a great blessing. It suggests a good intellect and the intelligent always rise to the top.

Homo Sapiens rules the Earth because of our vastly greater intelligence. The other hominids must have fallen a little short despite having greater physical strength in some cases, so they are gone. Now the question arises, what if the universe or some lab comes up with another species that is far more intelligent? If we are just a few genetic mutations away from the great apes, then this seems most likely to occur.

This line of thought always brings me back to the extraordinary yogis that have existed over the millennia. People who have capabilities that are so beyond the ordinary that most people cannot believe they exist. Some are said to have lived for thousands of years or have various abilities like levitation. A few years ago, when I was visiting India, I was told about a sage who was, at that time, living in a lake. He came out every few weeks for a few hours and

then went back under the water. The fish would nibble at his skin but no people disturbed him.

Finding a place to meditate undisturbed is very hard. That is why the yogis go so far into the Himalaya. Mountaineers saw beings walking in remote and uninhabitable places and there was talk about 'yetis'. Actually there is a Sanskrit word Yati for an ascetic. These people are protected by our disbelief but if they exist, and there are eyewitness reports that they do, then they would be a match for any advanced species, human or alien.

In one of the Vedic texts, the *Yoga Vasiṣṭha*, that is believed to be extremely ancient, it describes a voyage undertaken by two ladies far beyond our Solar system. The Goddess Saraswatī visits Queen Līlā and decides to take her on a tour of the universe. Refer to Ketu 105 for more on this story. Whatever one's willingness to believe, the statements in the *Yoga Vasiṣṭha* are surely quite remarkable.

ॐ अव्ययाय नमः

om avyayāya namaḥ

12. Imperishable.

While force perishes (*Vyaya*), truthful intelligence survives (*Avyaya*). Ultimately, only pure Truth is imperishable. It is the supreme blessing that this is knowable.

ॐ सोमजाय नमः

om somajāya namaḥ

13. Born (*Ja*) of the Moon (*Soma*).

Soma is the nectar of immortality. Imperishability comes from Soma, and Soma is the nectar of Truth. By adhering to truth we come closer to that and begin to feel the influence of the Soma. This makes us longer lived. That is how some saints in India have lived for hundreds or thousands of years. Of course, some people will find this incredible but I am not trying to convince anyone. If you spend time in India, you will see amazing things. The incredible can become credible. For most people, however, this longevity is more a matter of consciousness. One feels an inner sense of immortality and increasingly loses the fear of death.

ॐ सुखदाय नमः

om sukhadāya namaḥ

14. The giver (*Da*) of happiness (*Sukha*).

Truth is the only source of real happiness because it generates Soma, which is the essence of bliss. Mercury can represent all kinds of entertainment and entertainers. Gemini is especially associated with such people. Since its central part contains the constellation of tears, Ardrā, we get the classic tragic comic, someone who makes everyone laugh but has a tough personal life, or the tragicomedy of Shakespeare and others. Ardrā often produces astrologers. They have to see from where the crying is coming and try to bring some laughter.

ॐ श्रीमते नमः

om śrīmate namaḥ

15. Possessed of all auspiciousness and wealth.

Shrīman is also the first name of the Moon, the father of Mercury. The lineage of the Moon is full of auspiciousness.

ॐ सोमवंशप्रदीपकाय नमः

om somavaṁśapradīpakāya namaḥ

16. Shining (*Pradīpaka*) in the family of the Moon (*Soma Vaṁsha*).

He is the outstanding member of that lineage. The Moon and Mercury have a complex relationship. In the story, the Moon is the father of Mercury but in the chart the Moon is the mother. She, the mother, loves him but he sees her as an enemy. It is natural for a mother to love her child but children who have been born under unfortunate circumstances may blame their parents. Mercury, according to the story of his birth (Moon 3), was a bastard child. Even though he was adopted by his mother's husband, he feels badly towards his mother. These stories make it easy for us to remember the relationships between the Grahas in Vedic Astrology. At the same time, we see the same thing playing out in day-to-day life.

ॐ वेदविदे नमः

om vedavide namaḥ

17. The knower (*Vid*) of the *Veda*.

Mercury shines gloriously when it has imbued good knowledge. The Veda is the highest knowledge because it was not a human creation; the seers heard the hymns deep in their meditation and sung them out. Others copied them down. It is said 'Vedavid vedaiva bhavati', the knower of the Veda is the Veda itself, or becomes That. Listening to the Vedic hymns thrills the soul because it awakens the finest impulses of creation and consciousness itself. The words of the enlightened have a similar effect and the texts they have written are very powerful.

ॐ वेदतत्त्वज्ञाय नमः

om vedatattvajñāya namaḥ

18. The knower (*Jñā*) of the essence (*Tattva*) of the *Veda*.

Knowing the Veda is the first level of being a seer. Beyond that there is the level of fathoming the essence of it and expounding that for the benefit of others.

ॐ वेदान्तज्ञाणभास्कराय नमः

om vedāntajñāṇabhāskarāya namaḥ

19. Shining (*Bhāskara*) with the knowledge (*Jñāṇa*) of *Vedānta*.

What is the ultimate essence of the Veda? It is called Vedānta, literally the end, 'anta', of the Veda. Vedānta is the wisdom of Oneness. It arises from the direct experience of a state where all creation appears like a dream within a grand wholeness. The dream is real but transient and as such appears unreal. The wholeness is dominant. This makes the dream secondary or as if an illusion (*Maya*).

Anyone who persists with their spiritual practices can reach this state even if they have never heard of it. In fact it is never as one has heard, being inherently indescribable. Different intellects will express their experience differently and this can give rise to various philosophies. These philosophies can be useful if one has the experience described.

ॐ विद्याविचक्षणाय नमः

om vidyāvicakṣaṇāya namaḥ

20. Skilful (*Vicakṣaṇa*) in knowledge.

Vidyā indicates all kinds of knowledge from the sacred lore of the Vedas to all the arts and sciences. It can include special mantras and other techniques for doing magic. Mercury can be expert in this but it is only beneficial if not associated with any greed or selfishness, nor employed to assist any selfish persons.

ॐ विदुषे नमः

om viduṣe namaḥ

21. Wise (*Vidus*).

Whatever skill one has acquired must be associated with real wisdom. Book learning is not wisdom but it may help as a preparation. The biggest problem with learning is the acquisition of concepts. Concepts have their value but they cover up our innate knowing. Once we buy into ‘the world is like this’, then we stop innocently seeing the world as it is. All propaganda is about selling a concept because, once one has bought in, one is easily manipulated using that concept as a platform. It generates communities of people who imagine they are like-minded because they are all subscribers to a particular concept and that can be a positive thing until those managing the concept start a conflict with the members of a another conceptual group.

If one is to truly know oneself, one has to peel off the layers of concepts until the inner innocence is revealed. It is about letting go of concepts such as ‘I am female or male’. The realities remain but the identification with the differentiation loses its addictive grip. The soul is neither male nor female. It can take a female body and then take a male one. If there has been a long series of female bodies and then a male body is assumed, after some time the person may think ‘something is wrong, I should have been female’. The subtle structures of past lives remain and we are influenced by them but we only rarely visually remember memories of those lives. However, if we observe our experiences, we can figure out many things about these shadows. You go to a place and feel as if you’ve been there before. You meet a stranger but they seem familiar. A child is born and from the earliest age has particular talents or strong interests. How did Mozart start composing at the age of five?

My scientific colleagues may try to show that by some freak of chance, Mozart’s brain had some special wiring, which is all fine. That is the shadow I am talking about and it does not matter whether you want to make theories about past lives or imagine it is all chance. However, the evidence for past lives is quite extensive. Close to my home, the famous Univer-

sity of Virginia has a department specializing in reincarnation research. They have a database of over 2500 cases where children have given information about a previous life, which has been checked out to a greater or lesser degree. I have personally come across two clear cut cases like that, perhaps you have too. Since I started talking about it, several people have brought me their own experiences that sound convincing. I, myself, have thought forms from multiple cultures. This helps me identify with many different people. Had I been repeatedly reborn in the same culture, I would be one of those people fighting to protect it against any 'foreign' intrusion.

I can identify with Americans, Europeans, Indians, Africans, Chinese and Arabs but who am I? The truth is 'none of the above'. All of that is what is. My Indian shadow, an old pandit, is very strong. When I visit a Middle-Eastern country, I can sense I was a scholar there once and it is quite emotional. The only way to handle it is to let it be just as it is, let go of all the concepts and then there is a chance of knowing the real truth. The emotional body may still experience the dramas of the shadows but that is just the environment of the Self. The Self is beyond all races and all places.

ॐ विद्वत्प्रीतिकराय नमः

om vidvatprītikarāya namaḥ

22. He causes fondness (*Prītikara*) of those possessed of wisdom (*Vidvat*).

He represents those who are delighted by the wise or learned and they are delighted with him. Delighted means any kind of joy, friendliness or kindness. A teacher is always looking for a good student.

ॐ ऋजवे नमः

om ṛjave namaḥ

23. Upright, honest, straightforward, favourable (*Rju*).

The wise love those who are honest and upright and they help them. Good rulers attract good advisors. If the ruler is not honest the good advisors prefer to busy themselves in their private studies and with their students though they will do their best to protect the people through good advice, if asked.

ॐ विश्वानुकूलसञ्चाराय नमः

om viśvānukūlasaṅcārāya namaḥ

24. Bringing about (*Saṅcāra*) universal kindness. (*Viśva Anukūla*)

He has an attitude of agreeableness towards everything. The mark of a truly wise person is that they do not harbour any negative attitudes. Lord Rāma, who had to fight the demon Rāvaṇa who stole his wife, is the exemplar as he was never heard speaking ill of anyone.

The state of enlightenment is a state where everything is seen to emanate from or be of the same essence as the Self. One has no issue with one's own Being. There is a state where every body is equally one's own body. If one experiences this state, then it is easy to understand. Otherwise, we concern ourselves with one body and to a lesser extent a few others who appear close to us. It has been wisely said, 'knowledge is different in different states of consciousness'.

ॐ विशेषविनयान्विताय नमः

om viśeṣavinayānvitāya namaḥ

25. Possessed (*Anvita*) of exceptional politeness (*Viśeṣa Vinaya*), good conduct.

If Mercury is not strong, then we have to try a little harder to be polite. Vedic Astrology says that Mercury alone is exalted in its own sign. That means, if we want to exhibit more of Mercury's good qualities, we have to use our own intelligence and determination to do so. For example, if we want to spend time with people who do not swear and we have got into a habit of using swear words, then we can adjust if we firmly decide to do so and practise not swearing. It is the Pygmalion (My Fair Lady) story and all of us can up our game if for some reason we wish to do so. However, whether we have a certain type of behaviour or not has nothing to do with real wisdom. Society has concepts about what defines politeness. Mercury is capable of adjusting well to that.

ॐ विविधागमसारज्ञाय नमः

om vividhāgamasārajñāya namaḥ

26. The knower (*Jñā*) of the essence (*Sara*) of manifold scriptures and sciences (*Vividha Agama*).

The essence of the subject is determined by the intellect because that is its function. It

keeps penetrating until it reaches the finest level.

ॐ वीर्यवते नमः

om vīryavate namaḥ

27. Endowed with vitality (*Vīrya*).

Vitality arises from knowing the essence. The word Sāra used in the previous name (Mercury 26), means essence. It is closely related to the word Rasa, which is like the sap of a plant. Ayurveda makes Rasāyanas, herbal preparations, which make the body strong. Subtle insight vitalizes the intelligence. The vision of wholeness is the highest form of Rasa and revitalizes everything, even one's environment.

ॐ विगतज्वराय नमः

om vigatajvarāya namaḥ

28. Free from anxiety, fever (*Jvara*). Literally, dispersing (*Vigata*) it.

We may be anxious about using a machine until we understand how it works. In this way, proper knowledge removes anxiety like proper medicine removes fever. The knowledge of the unified wholeness of life removes the ultimate cause of all distress.

ॐ त्रिवर्गफलदाय नमः

om trivargaphaladāya namaḥ

29. Giving (*Da*) fruits (*Phala*) to the initiated.

What is it that gives fruits (*Phala*) to the initiated? It must be the object of their devotion, the Supreme Being. This is why, Mercury, the Graha, is associated with Lord Vishnu. Vishnu means the all-pervading One who sustains everything. Because he sustains everything, he is concerned about the social order and welfare.

Trivarga can refer to the three twice-born Varṇas or sections of society. That is, all the people who would take initiation into the Gāyatrī Mantra and practice it three times a day at sunrise, apparent noon and sunset. Whether one is fit for initiation has nothing intrinsically to do with one's family background. If one is sincerely interested in higher wisdom, then one is fit for initiation.

One's group as defined by Varṇa is based on one's mental propensity. Caste is a corruption of this based on birth. Caste systems of various kinds are found in most countries. After the Norman invasion of England in 1066, the society became intensely stratified and this only started to fall away quite recently.

Only a few hundred years ago, certainly in parts of India, caste was determined by one's choice of profession. Then it degenerated into a question of birth and some who were born into high caste families forgot the compassion of their forebears and obtained a low reputation for their clan. Naturally, children tend to follow the behaviour and profession of their parents but, where they follow a different path, they should be considered to belong to the 'caste' that suits their mentality and activities. That is, if one insists on having a caste concept at all. In reality, the disrespect earned by many 'high caste' people in India was due to simple human selfishness and misplaced pride while their family tradition was one of humility, generosity and care for the needy.

Vedic Astrologers and teachers of any Vedic discipline are Brāhmins by profession. Therefore, they must set a very high example and maintain a regular spiritual practice. The sages say to be a Brāhmin one must have a regular spiritual practice. After all, such practice has many precious benefits.

ॐ अनन्ताय नमः

om anantāya namaḥ

30. Endless (*Ananta*).

That which is endless is the Supreme Being. Some might say that intellectual enquiries into knowledge are also endless, by which they mean that they will never reach the Supreme. If, however, they do reach the Supreme they end in the endless.

If we have a strong influence of Mercury, we may tend to talk too much. If we can, we should convert this into the useful tendency of continuously repeating a mantra like this one while taking proper care when driving, handling machinery and any other task that requires full attention.

Ananta is said to be the great Nāga in serpent form on whom the Lord Vishnu rests. Ananta is the ruler of the upward direction and identified with Ketu, while Mercury's deity is Vishnu. Both are all-pervading and thus endless. Ananta is said to recite the names of Vishnu through his 1000 mouths, typifying the firmness of worship indicated in Mercury 6.

Thus the natural uprising of the Kuṇḍalinī Shakti, the power of awakening, is indicated

here as well as the result of this uprising, which is unbounded awareness, consciousness that is endless. The image of Vishnu resting on Ananta represents that endless consciousness that rests on the uprisen Kuṇḍalinī.

Ananta is said to have taken human form from time to time. His incarnations include Balarāma, the brother of Shrī Krishna, Mahārishi Jaimini, who taught the most advanced knowledge of Jyotisha as well as the *Purva Mimansa*, and Mahārishi Patañjali, who taught the great *Yoga Sūtras*. The *Yoga Sūtras* uplift our consciousness to a unified state and the *Purva Mimansa* then refines that condition so that only the ultimate onset of Brahman Consciousness remains. Beyond that there is no more meaning to states of consciousness though the process of refinement of the physical is endless.

ॐ त्रिदशाधिपपूजिताय नमः

om tridaśādhīpapūjītāya namaḥ

31. Worshipped (*Pūjita*) by Indra, king (*Adhipa*) of the gods and the wholeness of natural law.

The laws of nature are ever bowing to the Supreme Being, Vishnu. All of nature serves the wise. *Tridasha* means 3x10 or 30. This points towards the 30 degrees in each sign and specifically to the division of the sign into three sections of 10 degrees each. These are variously called Dṛkāṇa, Dreṣkāṇa, Drekkāṇa, etc. Mercury has Lord Vishnu as his deity but which form? This name reminds us that it depends in which Drekkāṇa it falls. The first indicates Lord Rāma, the second Lord Kṛṣṇa and the third other of the ten avatārs depending on the chart.

ॐ बुद्धिमते नमः

om buddhimate namaḥ

32. Possessed of intelligence.

This tells us explicitly that *Buddhi* or intellect has to be seen from Mercury in the chart. *Buddhi* has a very wide meaning including reasoning, judgment, comprehension, perception, meditation, presence of mind, having a ready wit, having a right opinion, etc.

Those ruled by Mercury exhibit all these things including a love for wittiness. People with a strong Mercury tend to crack jokes or use words cleverly.

ॐ बहुशास्त्रज्ञाय नमः

om bahuśāstrajñāya namaḥ

33. Knowing (*Jñā*) many sacred texts (*Bahu Shāstra*).

He knows many subjects. Mercury rules over two dual signs, Gemini and Virgo. A characteristic of dual signs is that they cause us to do multiple things at once which, being Mercury, means wanting to learn many things.

ॐ बलिने नमः

om baline namaḥ

34. Strong (*Balin*).

Even though Mercury is a small fast moving planet, its influence is strong. That is why Mahārishi Parāshara gives his astrological aspect full strength. The only other planet so endowed is Jupiter.

ॐ बन्धविमोचकाय नमः

om bandhavimocakāya namaḥ

35. Completely destroying (*Vimochaka*) bondage (*Bandha*).

Ignorance disappears when knowledge is acquired. Self-realization removes the illusion that 'I am this body and personality' and all the bondage that comes with that. The twelfth house of the astrological chart indicates bondage especially imprisonment, hospitalization, staying in an ashram or marriage. While the word bondage has a negative connotation, some forms of bondage, like marriage, are often much desired. Commitment is good. If there is a problem, it is to do with an internal identification with the experience, not the external situation. That identification is removed by real knowledge.

Mercury indicates childhood, especially from four to twelve, and can promote childish behavior. Having multiple affairs without a commitment is a very immature expression of Mercury. In the immature state we avoid commitment to avoid 'bondage'. In the mature state, we seek knowledge so we are free in the midst of all kinds of commitments.

ॐ वक्रातिवक्रगमनाय नमः

om vakrātivakragamanāya namaḥ

36. Having both retrograde (*Vakra*) and very retrograde (*Ativakra*) motions (*Gamana*).

Very retrograde means the phase of its apparent motion when the planet is moving backwards very fast. Mercury, being closer to the Sun than the Earth, appears to swing backward and forward in the sky and has the fastest backward motion of any planet. *Vakra* also has the sense of irregular motion. The Sun would be the example of regularity and Mercury's frequent change of direction is seen as irregular.

ॐ वासवाय नमः

om vāsavāya namaḥ

37. Wealthy (*Vāsava*).

Mercury rules over money and thus wealth (*Vasu*). An intelligent person is rarely poor unless that is his choice. Mercury gives both an interest and skill in business. Real wealth is a state of inner abundance and clarity. This name can also mean having the results of excellence or benevolence (*Vasu*). He rises up due to his good qualities. It is much more than just money.

ॐ वसुधाधिपाय नमः

om vasudhādhīpāya namaḥ

38. The lord (*Adhipa*) of the earth (*Vasudhā*). An emperor. Literally, the lord of wealth creation and liberality.

A strong Mercury can indicate the most wealthy tycoons. A penniless English woman wrote a few books using her fertile imagination and became wealthier than the Queen of England – J.K. Rowling.

ॐ प्रसन्नवदनाय नमः

om prasannavadanāya namaḥ

39. Has pleasant or pleasing speech (*Prasanna Vadana*).

If a writer's book is going to be read it has to please the reader. If the whole world likes it, you are made. If one's consciousness is pure, every word is delightful, whatever the words

spoken. It carries a pleasing, enlivening vibration. Whatever is one's state of mind and heart is what is conveyed, whatever the words one utters. Vadana can also mean the face. His look, his words and the points he makes are all pleasing.

ॐ वन्द्याय नमः

om vandyāya namaḥ

40. Worshipped (*Vandya*).

If people like your words, they may even become adoring fans, disciples or followers. Social media is heavily into Mercury!

ॐ वरेण्याय नमः

om vareṇyāya namaḥ

41. Pre-eminent (*Vareṇya*). The desired one.

Those with a strong Mercury are highly intelligent and the intelligent rule the Earth and the skies. We see that the smart overcome the strong but the kind of intelligence exhibited by the great sages is entirely beyond any kind of 'smart' we know. It is a strange and wondrous thing that the powers of nature will serve the truly intelligent. The mark of true intelligence is the complete lack of neediness and egotism.

One who has realized that level of intelligence has nothing further to acquire so takes nothing from anyone but constantly gives. That is why we all feel drawn to such people. We hope to get a little of their vastness. We pretend to be devoted but it is all selfishness. Even so, there is no blame because we know that we need help to rise higher and the wise want to help. It is their God-given task so there is no harm in approaching them. As long as we offer some service to them if the chance arises, there is no fault.

ॐ वाग्विलक्षणाय नमः

om vāgvilakṣaṇāya namaḥ

42. Of extraordinary speech (*Vāg Vilakṣaṇa*).

What one says or writes is exceptional in one way or another, which can include puns and strange or unexpected expressions. Naturally, this includes tales of wizardry. Motion pic-

tures and other art with something of the extraordinary in them are highly popular. This name may help those with writers block.

ॐ सत्यवते नमः

om satyavate namaḥ

43. Truthful (*Satya Vat*).

While Mercury can represent many kinds of expression, the best is one that expresses the highest truth. Someone with a strong Mercury should be naturally truthful. However, Mercury, being mercurial, is easily influenced by other planets as well as the sign it is in. The influence of Jupiter and the Sun are good as they have a natural purity being Sāttvic. The Moon is also Sāttvic so its influence is good but, as we have discussed, Mercury has issues with the Moon. Other planets can lead Mercury astray. If it were not so, the lawyers would have little business to do. The Tamas Grahas, Mars, Saturn, Rāhu and Ketu can easily modify the truth for their own ends. They tend to be careless with it. Venus, being Rajas, likes the idea of truth but it is not always expedient. If Jupiter associates, then the person will likely be truthful. This is also true if the person's Ascendant and Moon are strongly associated with the Sattva Grahas.

ॐ सत्यसंकल्पाय नमः

om satyasamkalpāya namaḥ

44. Of truthful (*Satya*) intention (*Samkalpa*).

Earlier we saw that Mercury can make a firm resolution and thereby gain great results. Sankalpa also means a definite intention to do something and here we see that it should be grounded in truth. Those ruled by Mercury must take care not to succumb to any dishonest plan.

ॐ सत्यबन्धवे नमः

om satyabandhave namaḥ

45. Of truthful association (*Bandhu*).

Only a few decades ago, all business transactions in London, for example in the gem trade, were done with a handshake. Often there were no paper contracts. It was well

known that 'An Englishman's word is his bond.' It was even more true in India when the traditional practices were prevalent and it certainly is true of good people all over the world today. However, it seems that cheating and criminality are increasing, especially copyright violation. Honesty is the principal currency of a prosperous society. Without it, the money drains into the accounts of lawyers and security firms. Wealth still circulates but much less efficiently because every stage has to be more carefully guarded. Eventually, society becomes ungovernable.

I once visited a country and my host was said to be the only truly reliable and entirely honest person. He meditated every day. He was quite old but the (highly corrupt) President called him out of retirement to head the department that decides all estate issues. The President knew that if he gave that job to anyone else, there would be chaos as every issue would be decided by a bribe. Even in an utterly corrupt government, an honest person is like gold because if there is no honesty, the whole structure collapses and then all the corrupt profits go with it. My friend died and shortly after that the country descended into civil war. The people were the nicest people but those who got themselves into positions of power often took advantage of it, as happens in many countries.

This name can also mean having truthful relatives and friends and Mercury is the significator for these in the Vedic chart.

ॐ सदादराय नमः

om sadādarāya namaḥ

46. Always (*Sadā*) respectful.

Adara is also reverence, honour, care, attention and eagerness. We have seen the importance of truthfulness. Now we are alerted to the importance of respectfulness as well as proper care and attention. These are all the keys to success in business as well as life in general. Purified consciousness respects everything because it sees itself in everything.

ॐ सर्वरोगप्रशमनाय नमः

om sarvarogaprasāmanāya namaḥ

47. Quieting (*Prashamana*) all (*Sarva*) diseases.

Roga is that which, literally, breaks up strength. Mercury rules over Virgo which is the place of herbs and medicine. If one's Moon is in Virgo, or is connected with it, then one

may follow a healing profession. Virgo is the sixth sign and is thereby connected to the sixth house, which rules over health and disease. Specifically it rules over the colon and good digestion is the key to good health. Virgo's main issue is weak digestion. If the consciousness is pure, then the digestion is not disturbed by the fluctuating state of the mind. Medicine and meditation, Ayurveda and Yoga, are the means indicated here. Mercury is therefore a key planet for doctors and medicine.

ॐ सर्वमृत्युनिवारकाय नमः

om sarvamṛtyunivārakāya namaḥ

48. Warding off (*Nivāraka*) all (*Sarva*) (causes of) death (*Mṛtyu*).

This is one reason why Mercury represents healers. In particular, Mercury is the doctor who treats using food and medicine as he does not want to cut the skin. Surgery and acupuncture require the energy of Mars.

ॐ वानिज्यनिपुणाय नमः

om vānijyanipuṇāya namaḥ

49. Skilled (*Nipuṇa*) in trade (*Vānijya*).

After two names pointing at medicine, we now are reminded of the importance of Mercury for business and money. This is not money derived by luck, it comes through his skillfulness.

ॐ वश्याय नमः

om vaśyāya namaḥ

50. Attractive (*Vashya*).

In so many ways, Mercury can make a person and a soul attractive. What makes someone attractive? Every one of our cells is programmed to do two things. Move away from pain and move towards resources. This programming is in the cell walls. The larger the cell wall, the better it works but there is a physical limit to how large a cell can become. Some scientists believe that larger organisms are nature's way of making a larger surface area. Whatever the truth, we do move towards a source of energy that we seek whether it is in the form of money, food, power, fertility or spiritual upliftment. A strong Mercury can give you an

abundance of one or more of these things and others move towards you as a result.

ॐ वाताङ्गाय नमः

om vātāṅgāya namaḥ

51. Beautiful limbed.

Ayurveda describes every disease in terms of Vāta (wind), Pitta (heat) and Kapha (phlegm). While each disease has a predominance of one, Vāta is implicated in everything especially pain. Vāta is the first to go out of balance so when it is balanced, health is good.

ॐ वातरोगहृते नमः

om vātarogahr̥te namaḥ

52. Taking away (*Hṛt*) diseases (*Roga*) caused by Vāta dosha.

Ayurveda describes every disease in terms of Vāta (wind), Pitta (heat) and Kapha (phlegm). While each disease has a predominance of one, Vāta is implicated in everything. Wherever there is pain, there is Vāta. Vāta is the first to go out of balance so when it is balanced, health is good.

ॐ स्थूलाय नमः

om sthūlāya namaḥ

53. Powerful.

Sthūla can also mean big, bulky, corpulent or clumsy but clearly this name does not intend coarseness and the like, though it hints at Mercury's connection to corpulence. Mercury's signs, Gemini and Virgo, are implicated in hormonal problems, which can promote obesity. This and the next name (54), echo Mercury's lordship over the Earth element.

ॐ स्थैर्यगुणाध्यक्षाय नमः

om sthairyaguṇādhyakṣāya namaḥ

54. Presiding (*Adhyakṣa*) over the quality (*Guṇa*) of firmness.

Sthula or *Sthairya* is difficult to move, it cannot be easily pushed around. Afflictions to Mercury can indicate damage to the physical structure such as broken bones. Someone with a clear intelligence is also difficult to manipulate with falsehood.

ॐ स्थूलसूक्ष्मादिकारणाय नमः

om sthūlasūkṣmādikāraṇāya namaḥ

55. Causing (*Kāraṇa*) grossness, subtlety and the like (*Adi*).

This points to an intellect that defines or judges. A refined intellect locates the fine (*Sukshma*) within the gross (*Sthūla*); it sees all qualities. *Adi* points at all kinds of qualities in the perceived world. The mind and senses register, the intellect recognizes and then defines or judges the qualities.

ॐ अप्रकाशाय नमः

om aprakāśāya namaḥ

56. Self-illuminated.

The ability to judge correctly is not a product of the intellect alone, which is not self-illuminated, but of the Self, perceiving through the intellect. While we can observe things, even subtle things, and judge or infer invisible things like the intellect, the Self is hidden. Another interpretation is that the intellect is 'dark'. *Prakāsha* is shining and 'a' can mean 'not'. That is, the intellect has no light of its own, it depends on the Self. Therefore, we should not rely on purely intellectual ways of acquiring knowledge. This is why, as one gets more educated, one becomes more and more aware of one's ignorance as one sees the extent of what one does not know. Only the Self is the seat of all knowledge.

ॐ प्रकाशात्मने नमः

om prakāśātmane namaḥ

57. The light of the Self (*Atman*).

This name clarifies the meaning of the last one (56). It is the Self that illumines all our organs of knowing. The intellect has been said to be 'the lamp at the door' making it possible for consciousness to realize itself as the Self and cognise the world at the same time.

ॐ घनाय नमः

om ghanāya namaḥ

58. Profound, solid (*Ghana*).

As lord of the earth element, Mercury rules over everything that has solidity. Solidity implies material substance but what is truly profound? Only infinity, as everything else is much smaller. That is the nature of the Self. It has no boundaries and exists everywhere.

ॐ गगनभूषणाय नमः

om gaganabhūṣaṇāya namaḥ

59. Decorating (*Bhūṣaṇa*) the heavens (*Gagana*) or adorned by it.

The planet Mercury is an ornament of the sky. For the Self-realized the universe exists within the Self as an ornament.

ॐ विधिस्तुत्याय नमः

om vidhistutyāya namaḥ

60. Praised (*Stutya*) by the wise, those whose intellect (*Dhi*) has attained pure discrimination (*Vi*).

It can also mean that he is praised by the Vedic rites and precepts (*Vidhi*). Here it is primarily pointing to Mercury as representing Lord Vishnu, the Godhead, but the Vedāntic texts praise the knowledge of the Self, which is being repeatedly pointed to here.

ॐ विशालाक्षाय नमः

om viśālākṣāya namaḥ

61. Large-eyed or one with a very broad vision (*Vishāla Akṣa*).

This also means illustrious and noble as noble people are those who are broad minded, not blinkered. This is a name used for Lord Shiva. He is famous for having his third eye wide open. It is also a name for Shrī Garuda, the king of the eagles and vehicle of Lord Vishnu.

Eagles are also famous for their exceptional vision. The great astrologer Swāmi Achyutānanda is said to be the incarnation of Shrī Garuda (see the chapter *The Journey*).

Swāmiji was one of the principal disciples (five friends) of Shrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the great devotee of Shrī Krishna who displayed his extraordinary grace about 500 years ago. Anyone he touched became thrilled with the nectar of devotion. He had a disciple who was a Muslim. For him, Chaitanya crafted the Hare Krishna mantra which was a reversal of the traditional Krishna mantra and which could be easily chanted by anyone. This mantra has become famous throughout the world.

ॐ विद्वज्जनमनोहराय नमः

om vidvajjanamanoharāya namaḥ

62. Enchanting (*Manohara*) the learned people (*Vidvat Jana*) (with his brilliance and good qualities).

Naturally, this extends to entertainers in general and reminds us that all kinds of public speakers are ultimately there to fascinate and entertain. If one looks at the Vedic charts of people who have risen to become national leaders, they all have a strong influence of Mercury. People have to want to listen to them.

ॐ चारुशीलाय नमः

om cāruśīlāya namaḥ

63. Dear, agreeable, esteemed, beautiful, elegant (*Chāru*) – the very principle (*Shīla*) of that.

ॐ स्वप्रकाशाय नमः

om svaprakāśāya namaḥ

64. Self-illuminated (*Sva Prakāsha*).

While Aprakāsha (Mercury 56) could refer to the subordinate or ordinary state of the intellect, this clearly refers to the superior nature of the Intelligence of the Self. Swa (or Sva) means ‘self’.

While we generally think that we are doing meditation and everything else in our lives, the wise know that the cosmic intelligence is doing it. The first experience of this often comes

in meditation when we stop trying and we find the whole thing going by itself. Initiation by a great master can often jump start this level of meditation.

ॐ चपलाय नमः

om capalāya namaḥ

65. Unsteady (*Chapala*).

We have seen how the Intelligence of the Self is rock steady but the intellect and the mind are constantly changing. Mercury can indicate both. We see *Chapala* in the financial and commodity markets, which Mercury rules, and everything the intellect manufactures other than the cognition of Truth.

There is a state where both are self-evident: the silence and the fluctuations arising in it. The first has no location while the second is localized. It is strange but real.

This name can also mean that which happens quickly or instantaneously. The Truth is always there but our recognition of it happens in a flash, as it were, even though that flash has no temporal or spatial location. This is why it is accessible from anywhere, anytime. In fact, prior to that flash, you can meditate on your own self-illumination because it is already existing. How do you do that? It is not a doing, it's a kind of imagination without imagining anything. I can only give you this clue. If that does not help, try to find a great soul who can open that door for you so it becomes obvious. If that is not possible, persist with your prayers or spiritual practice. It is just a matter of time. Everything you need comes when the time is right.

ॐ जितेन्द्रियाय नमः

om jitendriyāya namaḥ

66. One who has conquered (*Jita*) the senses (*Indriya*).

For this, one has to have one's attention on something that is steady. Otherwise, the senses follow the unsteadiness.

ॐ उदङ्मुखाय नमः

om udaṇmukhāya namaḥ

67. Facing (*Mukha*) North (*Udān*).

This describes the orientation of the statue of Mercury in the shrine of the nine Grahas. It is said Lord Shiva sits facing South so we face North to honour Him. Mercury is associated with Lord Vishnu and Vishnu and Shiva are always honouring each other. Vishnu is the infinite expansion and Shiva is the infinite silence. There is no difference at all in truth. Shiva is facing South as the Guru in the form of Dakshināmurti. Those who face North are the ones sitting facing the teacher and thus the students (Shishya), indicated by Mercury.

This also means facing upwards. Mercury is always looking for higher and higher truths, greater and greater prosperity. In the *Bible*, God says to man, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it.' We live in an age where we have truly fulfilled that mandate. The Biosphere, which is ruled by Mercury, is being overwhelmed by our tendency to expand, which is also connected to Mercury. Some people do not want to discuss (Mercury) this at all. Most of us prefer not to discuss being fruitful. Others focus on the climate (Mercury). Some populations are declining but wherever there has been a surge of resources (Mercury) the population is expanding at a great pace and spreading out to other countries as the local resources become insufficient. Mercury ruled people would call this 'interesting times'. If we listen more and insist less, then we will find a good way forward.

ॐ मखासक्ताय नमः

om makhāsaktāya namaḥ

68. Whose sacrificial rites (*Makha*) are uninterrupted (*Asakta*).

Asakta implies success through continuous focus undisturbed by any mental distractions. He is not concerned with the eventual outcome and is thus devoid of anxiety. Read as *āsakta* rather than *asakta*, it means fond of religious and other festivals. It can also mean naturally festive, cheerful and vigorous. Whatever the task, he is devoted to it.

ॐ मगधाधिपतये नमः

om magadhādhīpataye namaḥ

69. King (*Adhipa*) of *Magadha* (Southern Bihar).

As it happens, the Gautama Buddha is associated with this area of India. Buddha attained enlightenment in Bodhgaya, which is approximately in the centre of greater Bihar or

in the South of the current state of Bihar. In any case, it was within the Magadha kingdom. In addition, this area was the centre of education in the ancient world. The Vikramashila and Nalanda universities received students from as far away as Greece and Korea along with Japan, China, Indonesia, Persia, Turkey, etc. Nalanda is the most famous and is located about 55 miles south east of Patna. It was a Buddhist center of learning from 427 CE to 1197 CE. The Buddha himself stayed at Nalanda several times. The great Jain savant, Mahāvīr, also stayed in Nalanda on several occasions and attained Moksha (liberation) there. Both Buddha and Mahāvīr were born as royal princes.

In its heyday, Nalanda had 10,000 students in residence and 2,000 teachers. It had eight separate compounds and ten temples with lakes and parks. The library was a nine-storied building. There were many meditation halls and classrooms and many subjects were taught there including astronomy, astrology and medicine. It was sacked around 1193 though it continued for some time afterwards in a small way.

On June 12, 2007, *News Post India* reported the funding by Japan of an international university in Nalanda in Bihar. The report goes on to say that ‘The proposed university will be fully residential, like the ancient seat of learning at Nalanda. In the first phase of the project, seven schools with 46 foreign faculty members and over 400 Indian academics would come up ... The university will impart courses in science, philosophy and spiritualism along with other subjects. A renowned international scholar will be its chancellor.’” Nalanda University had its first academic session in September 2014.

ॐ हरये नमः

om haraye namaḥ

70. Yellow or greenish. These are the colours of Mercury.

Hari is a name is applied to many gods and planets. It is primarily a name of Lord Vishnu and identifies Mercury with Him. It also means a ray of light, fire or the wind. It has many meanings including a parrot. This indicates the ability to learn and repeat teachings, a sign of a good intellect and clear mind. This colour is discussed under Sun 65. See also Sun 85, Mercury 87 and Jupiter 55.

ॐ सौम्यवत्सरसंजाताय नमः

om saumyavatsarasamjātāya namaḥ

71. Born (*Samjāta*) in the year *Saumya*.

There is a cycle of 60 years (*Vatsara*) each with a name. This likely is based on the junction of the cycle of Jupiter, 12 years, and Saturn, about 30 years, as 60 is divisible by both. Naturally, Mercury is born in the year called Saumya, this being his nature and lineage (Mercury 3). According to the text *Jātaka Parijāta*, being born in Saumya makes one ‘tranquil, universally popular, exceedingly wealthy and firm-minded.’

ॐ सोमप्रियकराय नमः

om somapriyakarāya namaḥ

72. He creates (*Kara*) the dearness or tenderness (*Priya*) which arises through the flow of the nectar (*Soma*).

Somapriya means beloved of Soma – the Moon. Budha is the son of the Moon through Tārā (Mercury 13). Whatever the child’s attitude, his parents love him. This name tells us that he is creating this affection by his own qualities. It also tells us that the refined intellect is facilitating the sweetness of life.

Mercury helps our body be strong and healthy and keeps the hormonal system functioning well. He rules over the physical structure and provides medicines when needed. A healthy body supports a happy and tranquil mind.

ॐ महते नमः

om mahate namaḥ

73. The great one (*Mahat*). When Mercury is strong in a chart, the person gains respect for his or her intelligence and abilities.

ॐ सिंहाधिरूढाय नमः

om simhādhirūḍhāya namaḥ

74. Mounted (*Adhirūḍha*) on a lion.

Mercury’s vehicle is a lion but *Simha* can also mean an eminent person. If you want to see great intelligence, you have to seek a great personality. This name elaborates on the last (Mercury 73). The person is not just ‘great’, they are elevated onto a throne or high position. Kings used to try to collect the most intelligent and talented people to decorate their court.

One of the reasons that the USA became so powerful is because many of the brightest people from all over the world emigrated there.

Naturally, there is a deeper meaning. The awakened intellect also sits on a lion. At the junction of the intellect and the Pure Awareness, there is a roar as if Om is being continuously sounded. It is made of pure silence as the universe is made of space-time. This is the point from where the nature manifests everything so the Divine Mother Durgā functions from here and so is said to be riding on a lion or a tiger. It is the place of the highest power. When the intelligence of the individual sits at this point it is said to be mounted on a lion, capable of anything.

ॐ सर्वज्ञाय नमः

om sarvajñāya namaḥ

75. Knowing everything (*Sarvajña*).

This is the fruit of the highest humility. That state is the true hero.

ॐ शिखिवर्णाय नमः

om śikhivarṇāya namaḥ

76. The colour (*Varna*) of a peacock (*Shikhi*) – beautiful and multi-coloured.

Mercury represents variety, not just one colour but all the colours appear wonderful to the eye. The peacock displays his glory to attract his mate. Lord Krishna, who wore peacock feathers, dazzled the cowherd girls and the whole world.

ॐ शिवंकराय नमः

om śivaṁkarāya namaḥ

77. Causing (*Kara*) auspiciousness (*Shivam*) or fortunate occurrences. Giving happiness, prosperity and all kinds of good fortune. Also bliss and enlightenment.

ॐ पीताम्बराय नमः

om pītāambarāya namaḥ

78. Yellow-clothed.

Lord Vishnu is said to wear a yellow (*Pīta*) cloth (*Ambara*). It alludes to the glorious effulgence of the Self.

ॐ पीतवपुषे नमः

om pītavapuṣe namaḥ

79. Having a yellow, or golden (*Pīta*) form (*Vapus*).

His form is tinged with the glow of the celestial due to his internal surrender to truth. This is another way of describing a fully relaxed heart and brings the point that the relaxing of the heart is an endless process. Its end is a space beyond any individuality and is thus infinite. Rationally, a process cannot end in the infinite, which is why it is endless. However, quantum mechanics has shown that matter can suddenly fall into a ground state with infinite properties. For example, a loop of wire can become superconducting. This is a state where an electric current will flow forever. EEG studies suggest that such a state may arise in advanced meditators as the brain waves synchronize across the brain. This normally coincides with a subjective experience of unboundedness. In that condition, the body may be seen to glow.

Vapus is a wonder. That state is pure golden divinity. *Pīta* also means imbibed. The divine consciousness has been absorbed like water we drink and permeates everything.

ॐ पीतच्छत्रध्वजाङ्किताय नमः

om pītacchatradhvajāṅkitāya namaḥ

80. Marked or indicated (*Aṅkita*) by the emblem (*Dhvaja*) of a yellow (*Pīta*) umbrella (*Chhatra*).

The umbrella indicates high status. The yellow colour suggests a trace of *Rajas* or a tendency to action. Yellow light can be formed from an equal mix of red and green light so it comes between them in the rainbow. Green is the natural color of Mercury and very much relates to the earthiness of Virgo and the tranquility of Saumya (Mercury 3, 4). Red is the colour of *Rajas* and relates to the trading and unsteadiness (*Chapala*) aspects of Mercury. One pervading the other suggests a worldly wisdom, wisdom that moves in the field of life and action.

ॐ खड्गचर्मधराय नमः

om khaṅgacarmadharāya namaḥ

81. Carrying (*Dhara*) a sword (*Khaṅga*) and shield (*Charma*).

One moving in the field of action has to cut and ward off attacks. The sword represents how knowledge cuts the root of ignorance, and the shield how it protects from all error. Knowledge could mean worldly learning in the sense that knowing how to drive a car makes one competent in the driver's seat. It can also mean the state that arises when the thread of illusion is cut and one goes beyond all fear.

ॐ कार्यकर्त्रे नमः

om kāryakartre namaḥ

82. The doer or initiator (*Kartṛ*) of auspicious acts.

Kārya indicates Vedic rituals but suggests all works that nourish and uplift. More generally, *Kārya* is all kinds of business or enterprise, duty and conduct. It can refer to legal matters so Mercury indicates lawyers.

ॐ कलुषहारकाय नमः

om kaluṣahārakāya namaḥ

83. Destroying (*Hāraka*) wickedness. *Kaluṣha* is idleness, darkness, cruelty and dirtiness. Mercury is busy, gentle and pure.

ॐ आत्रेयगोत्रजाय नमः

om ātreyagotrajāya namaḥ

84. Born (*Ja*) in the family (*Gotra*) of the Brahmarishi *Atri*.

Atri was a great Vedic seer. This is also a name of the Moon, the father of Mercury. They were both born into Atri's lineage. Atri suggests one who is fully present. This state arises when one is not thinking of past, present and future. We typically imagine that the past is known and the future unknown. However, most of us remember little of the past and many have some intimations of the future.

The ability to know all that was, is and will be is explained in the Siddhis chapter of the

Yoga Sūtras (3.16). By fully allowing the heart to relax so that the past, present and future are no longer mentally mixed, one comes to see all of them clearly. How far one can see depends on the degree of completeness of the relaxation.

ॐ अत्यन्तविनयाय नमः

om atyantavinayāya namaḥ

85. Extremely polite (*Atyanta Vinaya*). Having the highest sense of decorum, courtesy, sense of propriety, good manners, reverence, modesty and humility.

It is impossible to be polite if one has a strong sense of one's difference from others, either due to an inflated or deflated ego. Both are products of ignorance. Knowing one's self to be the Self of all makes one perfectly polite. Of course, one might still behave in any way according to the circumstances but it is naturally appropriate.

ॐ विश्वपावनाय नमः

om viśvapāvanāya namaḥ

86. Purifying (*Pāvana*) everything (*Vishva*).

Having purified oneself, one's movement purifies everything else. That Pure Intelligence purifies everything. The central Nakshatra of Virgo is Hasta (the hand). This indicates those who use their hands for healing or who give good guidance. It is ruled by Savitṛ who is praised in the greatest of mantras, the Gāyatrī. In this mantra, He is asked to purify our intelligence. Mercury is exalted at 15 degrees of Virgo in Hasta.

ॐ चाम्पेयपुष्पसंकाशाय नमः

om cāmpeyapuṣpasamkāśāya namaḥ

87. Shining (*Samkāsha*) with *Chāmpeya* flowers (*Puṣpa*).

These greenish-yellow flowers are often used in offerings in the temples in India and are very pretty. They are the best offering in Budha's Pūja. The Chāmpeya flower is the flower of the Rose-apple tree. As befits Mercury, the fruit has numerous important healing qualities. By making this flower part of the Pūja, the sages ensured the trees would be grown and tended benefiting the health of the people.

ॐ चारणाय नमः

om cāraṇāya namaḥ

88. A bard.

Chāraṇa is an entertainer like an actor, dancer, bard or mimic. Typically, one that wanders (Charaṇa) from place to place entertaining the people, as most entertainers have to do even today. It also refers to the celestial singers as well as wanderers in general especially pilgrims. It can indicate one who reads the scriptures, perhaps out loud to others and also a spy.

ॐ चारुभूषणाय नमः

om cārubhūṣaṇāya namaḥ

89. Beautifully decorated (*Bhūṣaṇa*).

Chāru can mean saffron as well as lovely and pleasing. Saints often wear saffron. Having a delightful well-groomed appearance is a clear sign of Mercury dominating in the chart.

ॐ वीतरागाय नमः

om vītarāgāya namaḥ

90. Free (*Vīta*) from greediness (*Rāga*).

Mercury people also have to avoid greed, as it is a potential Achilles heel. For example, Mercury makes scientists. They are expected to advance human knowledge by producing objective results. However, their output can affect the bottom line of corporations so there are offers made to them that are not always in the public interest. On the other hand, scientists have to struggle hard to get research grants. This situation has led to a lot of unreliable results as has recently been exposed in the field of medicine.

Mercury also rules business people. They also need to be honest. I just read about a factory that smelted lead and had pollution control equipment because of the law. However, it cost money to use it so they operated the factory all night without the filter to make more money. 700 people in the vicinity were sickened so the owners were arrested. Some people think making more money by cheating or endangering others is clever but that is only

because their intelligence is corrupted. This kind of behaviour, which is only too common, is doing great damage to our world.

The only kind of intelligence that has absolutely no defects is Pure Intelligence that comes from complete simplicity of awareness. Humility and intelligence are two sides of the same coin. However, whatever state we are in currently we can do our best to be honest and kind and at the same time maintain a regular spiritual practice. This is also a name of Mars.

ॐ वीतभयाय नमः

om vītabhayāya namaḥ

91. Free (*Vīta*) from fear (*Bhaya*).

Fear is inherently false. We just have to know that deeply. A good leader knows when to retreat and does so calmly. Fear leads to panic and panic leads to destruction. Being free from fear is a great blessing. One may think that the accumulation of resources will remove one's anxiety, but this does not prove true. The more we have, the more we have to do to protect it. Fearlessness is a state of consciousness, independent of anything external. This mantra is one way to cultivate that.

ॐ विशुद्धकनकप्रभाय नमः

om viśuddhakanakaprabhāya namaḥ

92. Shining (*Prabha*) like purified gold (*Viśuddha Kanaka*).

This indicates a completely relaxed heart that has no issue with or judgment of anything. It simply shines.

ॐ बन्धुप्रियाय नमः

om bandhupriyāya namaḥ

93. Fond (*Priya*) of his relatives and friends.

Bandhu are those to which one is bound. This is often a blessing but sometimes we strain against our boundaries. We feel limited by our family and anything that appears to bind us, but a pure heart simply loves giving in to any kind of boundary because its status is untouched by it. It simply expands even more to accommodate the apparent restriction. This

is how we can love anyone however difficult they appear to be.

ॐ बन्धुयुक्ताय नमः

om bandhuyuktāya namaḥ

94. Enjoying the close ties (*Yukta*) with the family, spouse, parents and all kinds of kinsmen and colleagues (*Bandhu*).

Mercury people tend to be family people. Again, we see why Mercury represents friends and relatives like uncles and aunts astrologically and why business flourishes through team work.

ॐ बानमण्डलसंश्रिताय नमः

om bānamaṇḍalasaṁśritāya namaḥ

95. Stationed (*Samshrita*) on the diagram (*Maṇḍala*) of an arrow (*Bāna*).

Each Graha has a diagram, which is used in the Pūja. An arrow points the direction and reaches the goal like a good intellect. *Bānamaṇḍala* literally means a circle of arrows like the tendency to acquire all kinds of learning or a circle of light illuminating in all directions.

ॐ अर्केशाननिवासस्थाय नमः

om arkeśānanivāsasthāya namaḥ

96. Stationed (*Nivāsastha*) to the North East of the Sun (*Arka*).

This tells us where to put the statue of Budha for Pūja. The North East is the direction of *Ishāna* or God. This points to the divine nature of Budha and his association with Lord Vishnu. In Vastu, Vedic architecture, the sacred space is in the North East corner of our home or room. It is advised to keep that area free of heavy furniture and clutter. If possible, this should also apply to our property (land) as a whole.

ॐ तर्कशास्त्रविशारदाय नमः

om tarkaśāstraviśāradāya namaḥ

97. Fully expert (*Vishārada*) in the subject (*Shāstra*) of logic (*Tarka*) and all the related texts.

Tarka means logic, reasoning and philosophical speculation. A strong Mercury can make one brilliant in these intellectual areas.

ॐ प्रशान्ताय नमः

om praśāntāya namaḥ

98. Completely at peace (*Prashānta*).

As this follows 97, it shows that peace is the fruit of expertise in logic. Logic must provide a path to the ultimate truth. Reasoning, when fully developed, makes one truly honest as one cannot help but see through every one of one's own self-deceptions. A mathematician who follows the rules of logic produces a proof that must be true. That result then becomes an established fact and allows others to build on it. If we are fully logical about our life we know that there is nothing that we really need to be at peace. This realization, leaves us in a state of peace.

ॐ प्रीतिसंयुक्ताय नमः

om prītisaṃyuktāya namaḥ

99. Utterly delighted (*Prīti*).

This is the inevitable result of being Prashānta (Mercury 98). Being fully attached (*Samyukta*) to pleasure is another lower level interpretation of the name. Prīti can go as far as addiction but is more about love, fondness and ultimately pure delight.

ॐ प्रियकृते नमः

om priyakṛte namaḥ

100. Causing (*Kṛt*) fondness (*Priya*).

A delighted heart loves all and is widely popular.

ॐ प्रियभूषणाय नमः

om priyabhūṣaṇāya namaḥ

101. Fond of (*Priya*) ornaments, having delightful ornaments or decorated (*Bhūṣaṇa*) by one's dearness.

A person dominated by a strong Mercury can be very delightful.

ॐ मेधाविने नमः

om medhāvine namaḥ

102. In bliss. Having the mead of pure joy (*Medhāvin*).

An unafflicted Mercury brings happiness to those areas of the chart it rules just as Pure Intelligence causes the flow of Soma. This name also means a learned or clever person, one with the capability of being a teacher. Generally, people of high intelligence are expected to teach in some capacity. The word *Medhā* implies a kind of intoxication that comes from a profound intelligence rejoicing in its cognitions of reality.

Truly intelligent people should not be depressed. That would come from some shadow over the light of intelligence. With some work, that shadow will surely be overcome. It is not right to think that one is not intelligent. A diamond can be caked in a lot of mud but if we polish it, eventually it will start to shine and, if we persist, will truly sparkle. In India, they say take up some name of God and just keep repeating it until one finds a holy soul to give you further guidance. I believe the advice is the same in all the religions even if the prayers are varied. The early Christian church had a wonderful prayer, '*Deus honorum omnium*', God honours all. It is understood that it was taught by St Peter to be given to clergy on their ordination³.

ॐ माधवासक्ताय नमः

om mādhavāsaktāya namaḥ

103. Endlessly blissful.

Mādhava is joy and *Asakta* is an uninterrupted condition. This is one meaning based on *asakta* but it could also be read as *āsakta*, devoted or attached.

Mādhava is the one born of the *Madhu* or divine nectar. It indicates a state of pure unbounded bliss. When that is touched, the intellect becomes *āsakta* or devoted to that. By virtue of that, the state becomes continuous. It can never turn back and get lost in the worldly

differences even though it may observe them now with much greater clarity.

Mādhava is a name of Lord Krishna. Here is a clue to how Mercury represents Lord Vishnu and thus Lord Rāma and Lord Krishna in the birth chart. Mercury represents them by being their devotee. It's presence in the fifth house or associated to the fifth house, for instance, gives us that devotional inclination. By meditating on Mādhava, with time we can reach the blissful state.

ॐ मिथुनाधिपतये नमः

om mithunādhīpataye namaḥ

104. The ruler (*Adhipati*) of Gemini (*Mithuna*) Rāshi.

Mithuna means a pair or pairing. It is indicative of dual things and has conjugal energy. Mithuna people put their energy into Dharma or what they see is beneficial for the world.

The intellect is all about analysis and duality. It flourishes in Gemini. Any planet in Gemini tends to increase intellectual capability. Gemini people tend to be interested in many things, they are always learning. They also tend to do many things at once. One side effect is a difficulty in making decisions. It is too easy to see the virtue in all the choices.

ॐ सुधिये नमः

om sudhiye namaḥ

105. Pious, clever, wise, sensible, religious (*Sudhī*). A learned person or teacher.

This is how Mercury should be in Gemini. They help others understand and develop.

ॐ कन्यारशिप्रियाय नमः

om kanyārāśīpriyāya namaḥ

106. Fond of (*Priya*) Virgo (*Kanyā Rashi*).

He is the lord of Gemini but fond of Virgo. Thus Virgo becomes the place where Mercury is happiest. Technically, in Jyotisha, it is both his own sign, his MūlaTrikoṇa and his exalted place. MūlaTrikoṇa is a place that is between own and exalted in the strength of placement. It is like the office. It is our place but is quite different from our home. At home, we relax. In the office we are busy with what we have to do.

Being an earth sign, Virgo is best in helping Mercury to express his stability and rulership over the earth element. Gemini is excellent for intellectual pursuits. Amongst the Ascendants of the American Presidents for which we have reliable birth date and time, two have Gemini and seven have Virgo rising. In fact, Virgo is the most common rising sign the next being Aries found in four Presidents⁴.

ॐ कामप्रदाय नमः

om kāmāpradāya namaḥ

107. Giving (*Prada*) pleasure.

Kāma is conjugal pleasure and pleasures of the senses in general. Mithuna (Gemini) means a couple and is related to bedrooms and playgrounds while Virgo represents, among other places, those suitable for intercourse and gardens.

Mars, the promoter of celibacy, naturally sees Mercury as an enemy being one who enjoys and promotes conjugal relations. Mercury is only indifferent towards Mars as he does not mind what Mars does.

In the planetary court, Mercury represents princes and Mars, generals. Princes are notorious for their affairs and the king's general naturally frowns on this as he knows that the defence of the kingdom needs discipline. He is also aware that when the prince becomes the king, he may be fired. Being the senior, the prince has no reason to trouble himself with enmity towards the general.

ॐ घनफलाश्रयाय नमः

om ghanaphalāśrayāya namaḥ

108. Receiving (*Ashraya*) steadfast (*Ghana*) results (*Phala*).

As the overlord of the earth element, Mercury can produce solid, auspicious and lasting results. When afflicted, outcomes may be unstable but when strong, they are very profound. As the signifier of wealth, Mercury is especially strong in Taurus, the natural second house.

In this mantra, there is a hint of the joy of those who take refuge (*Ashraya*) in the love of God, especially Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna has his Ascendant and Moon in Taurus and is called Ghana Shyāma, emphasizing his firmness and profundity along with a dark blue or

black, which is also associated with Budha.

This name indicates that a clear intelligence is founded on a natural stability and abundance. May divine Budha bless you with that natural abundance and clarity of intelligence.

ॐ तत् सत्

Om tat sat

THE MANTRAS OF BUDHA IN TRANSLITERATION

1. om budhāya namaḥ
2. om budhārcitāya namaḥ
3. om saumyāya namaḥ
4. om saumyacittāya namaḥ
5. om śubhapradāya namaḥ
6. om dṛdhavratāya namaḥ
7. om dṛdhaphalāya namaḥ
8. om śrutijālaprabodhakāya namaḥ
9. om satyā'vāsāya namaḥ
10. om satyavacase namaḥ
11. om śreyasāṁ pataye namaḥ
12. om avyayāya namaḥ
13. om somajāya namaḥ
14. om sukhadāya namaḥ
15. om śrimate namaḥ
16. om somavaṁśapradīpakāya namaḥ
17. om vedavide namaḥ
18. om vedatattvajñāya namaḥ
19. om vedāntajñāṇabhāskarāya namaḥ
20. om vidyāvicakṣaṇāya namaḥ
21. om viduṣe namaḥ
22. om vidvatprītikarāya namaḥ
23. om ṛjave namaḥ
24. om viśvānukūlasaṁcārāya namaḥ
25. om viśeṣavinayānvitāya namaḥ
26. om vividhāgamasārajñāya namaḥ
27. om vīryavate namaḥ
28. om vigatajvarāya namaḥ
29. om trivargaphaladāya namaḥ
30. om anantāya namaḥ
31. om tridaśādhipapūjitāya namaḥ
32. om buddhimate namaḥ
33. om bahuśāstrajñāya namaḥ
34. om baline namaḥ
35. om bandhavimocakāya namaḥ

36. om vakrātivakragamanāya namaḥ
37. om vāsavāya namaḥ
38. om vasudhādhīpāya namaḥ
39. om prasannavadanāya namaḥ
40. om vandyāya namaḥ
41. om vareṇyāya namaḥ
42. om vāgvilakṣaṇāya namaḥ
43. om satyavate namaḥ
44. om satyasamkalpāya namaḥ
45. om satyabandhave namaḥ
46. om sadādarāya namaḥ
47. om sarvarogaprasāmanāya namaḥ
48. om sarvamṛtyunivārakāya namaḥ
49. om vāṇijyanipuṇāya namaḥ
50. om vaśyāya namaḥ
51. om vātāṅgāya namaḥ
52. om vātarogahr̥te namaḥ
53. om sthūlāya namaḥ
54. om sthairyaguṇādhyakṣāya namaḥ
55. om sthūlasūkṣmādikāraṇāya namaḥ
56. om aprakāśāya namaḥ
57. om prakāśātmane namaḥ
58. om ghanāya namaḥ
59. om gaganabhūṣaṇāya namaḥ
60. om vidhistutyāya namaḥ
61. om viśālākṣāya namaḥ
62. om vidvajjanamanoharāya namaḥ
63. om cāruśīlāya namaḥ
64. om svaprakāśāya namaḥ
65. om capalāya namaḥ
66. om jitendriyāya namaḥ
67. om udamukhāya namaḥ
68. om makhāsaktāya namaḥ
69. om magadhādhipataye namaḥ
70. om haraye namaḥ
71. om saumyavatsarasamjātāya namaḥ
72. om somapriyakarāya namaḥ
73. om mahate namaḥ

74. om simhādhirūḍhāya namaḥ
75. om sarvajñāya namaḥ
76. om śikhivarṇāya namaḥ
77. om śivaṁkarāya namaḥ
78. om pītāmbarāya namaḥ
79. om pītavapuṣe namaḥ
80. om pītacchatradhvajāṅkitāya namaḥ
81. om khaṇḡacarmadharāya namaḥ
82. om kāryakartre namaḥ
83. om kaluṣahāarakāya namaḥ
84. om ātreya gotrajāya namaḥ
85. om atyantavinayāya namaḥ
86. om viśvapāvanāya namaḥ
87. om cāmpeyapuṣpasarṁkāsāya namaḥ
88. om cāraṇāya namaḥ
89. om cārubhūṣaṇāya namaḥ
90. om vītarāgāya namaḥ
91. om vītabhayāya namaḥ
92. om viśuddhakanakaprabhāya namaḥ
93. om bandhupriyāya namaḥ
94. om bandhuyuktāya namaḥ
95. om bānamaṇḍalasarṁsritāya namaḥ
96. om arkeśānanivāsasthāya namaḥ
97. om tarkaśāstraviśāradāya namaḥ
98. om praśāntāya namaḥ
99. om prītisarṁyuktāya namaḥ
100. om priyakṛte namaḥ
101. om priyabhūṣaṇāya namaḥ
102. om medhāvine namaḥ
103. om mādhavāsaktāya namaḥ
104. om mithunādhipataye namaḥ
105. om sudhiye namaḥ
106. om kanyārāśīpriyāya namaḥ
107. om kāmāpradāya namaḥ
108. om ghanaphalāśrayāya namaḥ

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While these lists are well known to traditional astrologers in India, I only found two places where they had been printed. I am thus indebted to Dr Mrs Saraswathy and Prof. B. A. Eeswaran for publishing a Sanskrit text of the names of the Grahas in their book *NavaGrahas*, albeit without translation and source, and Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao for his outstanding compendium *The NavaGraha Kosha*, which includes another set. Prof. Rao informed me that his work was based on a medieval text. Regretfully Prof. Rao has passed away. These two sources have some differences. Where I felt that both versions of a name had merit, I included both under the same number.

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Two great artists have kindly allowed me to showcase their beautiful work. Pieter Weltevrede, acclaimed Dutch master painter, did all the colour work. The drawings were done by the highly talented Jane Adams. Find out more about them in the Section 'The Artists'.

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Andrew Foss has a PhD in Computing Science from the University of Alberta and is also an Oxford University Physics graduate with publications in Nature and other leading scientific journals. He is the author of the book *High-Dimensional Data Mining*. He enjoys a deep love of music, art and poetry and has more than 30 years experience studying and teaching the Vedic wisdom around the world. He is the Founding President of the British Association of Vedic Astrology, Editor of the BAVA Journal *Gochara* and is a Certified Jaimini Scholar and Jyotish Pandit, the highest professional certifications in Vedic Astrology involving nine years of continuous study. He has developed the unique, easy and powerful software **Shri Jyoti Star** that has become the first choice amongst the leading Vedic Astrologers around the world. Andrew is married and lives with his family in Virginia, USA.

SECRETS OF VIMSHOTTARI DASHĀ

As a bonus I have decided to publish some unique secrets about Vedic Astrology in the printed version of this book, which will also have the mantras of all nine planets. Please visit YogaOfThePlanets.com for more information.

For 33 years, I, like everyone else who studies Jyotisha, wondered about the origin of the lengths of the Vimshottari Dashās. I could never find a way into this mystery. Nowhere in the literature, ancient or modern, can even a satisfactory hint be found. Then, on July 7, 2015, I saw on the web at least a partial derivation of the sequence of lords. It relied on knowing the Dashā cycle lengths. At the end, the author appealed for someone to find a solution to the problem of deriving the length of the cycles. The thought came, 'let's give it a shot'.

I pulled out a fresh sheet of paper and started writing down equations that might help. Bit by bit the key principles unfolded themselves. It did not take long to realize that I had an answer and it just required some polishing. In the process, some wonderful insights appeared as well as a profound advance in the understanding of the Tāra Bala, which is most important for interpreting the Dashā. I have not found this written anywhere. Therefore, both these re-markable and interesting secrets were given to me and I am sharing them with you.

Notes

The AtmaKāraka is the soul planet. It is the Graha that has advanced furthest in its zodiacal sign. Rahu is naturally retrograde, so it is an exception being measured from the end of the sign. Ketu is not considered as it represents the freedom of the soul, not its embodiment.

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